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# MOUNT AUGUSTUS

## THE BIGGEST ROCK IN THE WORLD

MOUNT AUGUSTUS, one of the World's most spectacular peaks, towers 2,354 feet above the surrounding plain and is 3,627 feet above sea-level. This mighty monoclinical appearing like a giant anthill is visible for more than a hundred miles, and has long been a landmark both by air and road.

MOUNT AUGUSTUS STATION which is situated right at the base of "THE ROCK" is over 100 years old and covers over one million acres. The Station is still a working Station running beef cattle and has over 72 windmills to be maintained. The average rainfall in the area is approx. 8 inches which falls during the months of November to February. There is no shortage of water as there is ample underground water and the Station does not need to rely on rainwater for domestic consumption.

MOUNT AUGUSTUS was named on 31st August, 1858, by F.T. Gregory after his brother Augustus, who was then leading an expedition in search of the remains of Dr. Leichardt. The mountain was first ascended on 3rd June, 1858, by F.T. Gregory and is the culminating point of a long and broad ridge about 5 miles in length. The upper portion of the North face is an almost vertical escarpment.

The rocks of Mount Augustus are of Upper Proterozoic age, being deposited on an ancient sea floor as sand and boulders some one thousand million years ago. The deposits of sand and boulders consolidated to form sandstone and conglomerate strata which were eventually uplifted and folded. The strata at Mount Augustus are folded in an anticline - that is an upfold like and inverted V.

The sandstone and conglomerate strata of Mount Augustus are continuous over a wide area and occur at nearby Mount Phillip and in the Parry range, 100 miles to the north-west. The strata lie unconformably on granitic rock which formed the floor of the sea on which the sand and boulders were deposited. This granitic rock which lies under the rocks of Mount Augustus is 1,650 million years old.

MOUNT AUGUSTUS is constantly being compared with Ayers Rock but this is like trying to compare a Holden with a Rolls Royce, both are motor vehicles but completely different in most respects. Ayers Rock is a monolith without any growth whatsoever whilst Mount Augustus is covered with scree. Mount Augustus is more than twice the size of Ayers Rock and while it is, possibly, not as dramatic to look at as Ayers Rock it has a splendour and mystique which justifies it being called "MAGIC MOUNTAIN". It constantly changes colour from bright red at sunrise through shades of green to hues of blue and purple to red again at sunset. Some of the most spectacular sunsets in the world may be seen at Mount Augustus.



To see everything there is at Mount Augustus would take anything up to a week but most visitors spend at least three days walking up the beautiful waterfall area, which leads right to the summit where they may sign the visitors' book placed inside a cairn or visit "Edney's Lookout" which was the home of a rustler for many years at the turn of the century. The spring beside which he built his humpy is still there as are signs of his stockyards and old well. There are five graded roads into the base of the Rock all of which offer something of interest to visitors — interesting rock formations, caves and, of course, the Aboriginal drawings which are found on many parts of the Rock. These are very primitive and are thought to be pre-Dreamtime.

The area boasts numerous varieties of bird and wildlife and is a birdwatcher's dream as nearly one hundred species have already been identified. Nearby Cattle Pool on the Lyons River is a magical stretch of clear, blue water shaded by magnificent ghost and river gums where visitors may fish, swim, canoe, as it is over 2 kms in length and very deep. An ideal spot for a picnic lunch, a stroll along the banks or just whiling away the hours with a good book under a shady tree.

In order that visitors may enjoy the grandeur and beauty of this magnificent part of the outback the owners of Mount Augustus Station have provided a Tourist Complex which offers airconditioned motel-type units, powered sites for caravans and an extensive grassed camping area with plenty of toilets and showers and oceans of hot water and laundry facilities. There is a shop which carries basic supplies and sells souvenirs etc. Petrol and unleaded petrol, diesel and avgas are available seven days a week. Home-cooked meals are provided in the well-appointed restaurant should visitors prefer to dine-out as a change from a barbecue under the stars.

MOUNT AUGUSTUS may be reached from many directions — 450 kms from Carnarvon, 350 kms from Barradale, 350 kms from Meekatharra via Landor, from Newman or Mullewa. The roads into Mount Augustus are well-maintained gravel and present no problems to most drivers. However, if you wish to avoid a bit of dust the Mount Augustus Station airstrip is an all-weather strip, capable of taking a DC3, and only a few minutes walk from the Tourist Resort. Alternatively some visitors prefer to leave their caravans at either Meekatharra or Carnarvon and may take advantage of the special two or three night accommodation offered by Mount Augustus Station. A simple phone call to (099) 43 0527 will tell it all.

MOUNT AUGUSTUS is fast becoming a mecca not only for overseas visitors but also for geologists, botanists, ornithologists, cavers, climbers, hikers and nature lovers in general. In season the surrounding area is a carpet of wildflowers and wildlife may still be seen running free and at close quarters.

The peace and serenity of this area is best summed up by a quote from the Mount Augustus Station Tourist Resort visitors' book: —

**'TRULY A CORNER OF EDEN'**

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